TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 7, 2025

Members Present: Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Jonathan Ursprung
Members Absent: Beth Cook, Alice Peal
Staff Present: JB Weir, Zoning Administrator
Others Present: None

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Jonathan Ursprung. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Public Forum

Nobody requested an opportunity to comment.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of September 16, 2025 were approved.

5. Village Master Plan Update

JB had provided a summary of the recent Steering Committee (SC) meeting in the PC meeting packet, and AnnMarie highlighted some of the content. She noted that the response from Shannon Morrison indicating that there had never been a moratorium/limit on Irasville area Wetland permitting was in conflict with what was understood by the SC and others, and also noted that no response had yet been received from Mike of the Army Corps.

Next, AnnMarie pointed out the new, more limited, wetland regulations to be developed based upon Governor Scott's recently issued Executive Order. She explained that Tucker of SE Group will be working to clarify what is considered unmapped Class II wetlands in the Irasville area, as those areas will not need to follow Wetland Rules as had been anticipated. SE Group will also be working to clarify what is meant by the term 'housing development' in the Executive Order, to determine whether mixed use development or conversion of existing development will be included in the definition of 'housing development.'

SE Group had also provided the SC with a preview of the final report, which is organized into three sections: Vision, implementation actions, and implementation strategies. This is planned to be presented to the PC in December.

JB reported on the progress of grant applications, including the CDBG (Carroll Road culvert and other items) and NBRC (wastewater project) grants, both of which coincide with the Master Planning work.

The next SC meeting will be held the week of October 27.

6. CVRPC Update

Alice had provided updates in an email, including a CHIP update, a Wetlands update statement from DEC (which was noted as being inaccurate during the meeting, as certain wetland buffers have been reduced to 25 feet), and a reminder of the presentation by CVRPC regarding Future Land Use mapping on October 27.

7. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB spoke of the workshop recently held with the Selectboard, where information was provided by Joshua Schwartz and York Haverkamp regarding the project, funding, and plans moving forward. The topic of initiation a Local Options Tax (LOT) was discussed at that meeting, based upon information provided in a white paper drafted by Joshua and Sam of the MRVPD. JB indicated that 80% of the revenue generated from a LOT is anticipated to be from non-residents, and also noted that some of the funds would be set aside specifically for wastewater development. Materials related to this were included in the meeting packet.

Emma raised the concept of crowdfunding a portion of the Wastewater Project financing.

Bob explained that work is continuing on having all needed property owners agree to pumping station locations.

8. 2025-2026 Work Plan

Town Plan update – it was agreed that the PC will move forward with an amendment to address child care requirements, and be prepared to draft a full revision for 2031.

Short term rentals – Jonathan reported on a conversation he had with Dan Raddock and Jim Crafts of Warren regarding the Granicus software that Warren is putting to use in implementation of their Short Term Rental Ordinance. He explained some of the features of the software, and confirmed that there may be potential for partnering with Warren to negotiate with Granicus for a reduced annual software fee.

PC members were in agreement that the Warren Ordinance covers the aspects of STRs that Waitsfield would likely prefer to regulate, and discussed that it would be helpful to gain an understanding of the objections heard in Warren as their ordinance was drafted, as well as some other data points, such as whether STRs are leading to more emergency response calls. It was also noted that funds collected through an STR registration process might be used for expenses related to visitors, such as road maintenance.

The timeline for this work was discussed, and Jonathan indicated that the PC would work on this topic based upon Selectboard preference for a completion date.

9. Other Business

Jonathan noted some items covered at the recent MRVPD meeting: Sam Robinson will be departing his position at the PD, Warren is applying for an NDA designation, and discussion of the potential for a Valley-wide MOU and Mutual Aid agreement to ensure that towns can be compensated for assistance provided (primarily by road crews) during an emergency.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary